

Message Text

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12

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 SAJ-01 NIC-01 /057 W

----- 125714

R 251803Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5912

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 16879

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, PL

SUBJECT: FRG RELATIONS WITH POLAND

1. OCTOBER 21 EDITION OF DER SPIEGEL CARRIES ARTICLE ALLEGING GROWING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT AND FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER OVER HOW TO RESTORE MOVEMENT TO NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN BONN AND WARSAW. ACCORDING TO SPIEGEL, GENSCHER HAS TAKEN PARTICULAR INTEREST IN POLAND AND HAS DECIDED TO TREAT BONN-WARSAW RELATIONS AS HIS PRESERVE. ARTICLE POINTS OUT THAT GENSCHER PARTICULARLY MENTIONED POLAND IN HIS SPEECH AT THE FDP CONVENTION IN HAMBURG IN LATE SEPTEMBER. GENSCHER, ARTICLE SAYS, WOULD LIKE AT MINIMUM TO MAKE CLEAR TO

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THE POLES THAT THE FRG STILL REGARDS ITS FINANCIAL OFFER

AS NEGOTIABLE. THIS WOULD APPLY AS WELL TO THE POLISH DEMANDS FOR FINANCIAL COMPENSATION OF POLISH VICTIMS OF NAZISM. SCHMIDT, ON THE OTHER HAND, CONTINUES TO INSIST THAT THE FRG'S RESPONSE TO THE LETTER WHICH GIEREK SENT TO SCHMIDT IN EARLY SEPTEMBER, SHOULD MERELY REITERATE THE OLD OFFER OF A DM 1 BILLION SUBSIDIZED CREDIT AND A LUMP-SUM PENSIONS PAYMENT IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF DM 500 MILLION. SPIEGEL STATES THAT SCHMIDT IS SUPPORTED IN THIS POSITION BY FINANCE MINISTER APEL BUT THAT IT IS NOT NECESSARILY THE CHANCELLOR'S LAST WORD ON THE SUBJECT. ARTICLE CITES A SOURCE CLOSE TO SCHMIDT AS SAYING THAT THE CHANCELLOR UNDERSTANDS THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE BONN-WARSAW RELATIONSHIP AND REALIZES THAT THE FRG CANNOT PINCH EVERY MARK.

2. COMMENT : ON THE BASIS OF OUR OWN TALKS WITH FOREIGN OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES, WE BELIEVE THERE IS SOMETHING TO THE SPIEGEL STORY ALTHOUGH, AS USUAL IN THIS MAGAZINE, THE DIFFERENCES ARE PROBABLY OVERSIMPLIFIED AND EXAGGERATED. WORKING-LEVEL OFFICIALS IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAVE FELT SINCE EARLY THIS YEAR THAT A LESS RIGID FRG POSITION AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME (I.E., DURING THE OLSZOWSKI VISIT IN DECEMBER 1973) MIGHT HAVE LED TO A FIRM AGREEMENT WHICH THE POLISH FOREIGN MINISTER COULD HAVE DEFENDED SUCCESSFULLY IN WARSAW AND WHICH WOULD HAVE RESULTED INTER ALIA, IN PERMISSIONS TO EMIGRATE FOR AT LEAST 150 THOUSAND ETHNIC GERMANS OVER A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS. OUR CONTACTS BELIEVE THAT IT MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN NECESSARY TO AGREE EXPLICITLY TO COMPENSATION PAYMENTS BUT THAT, RATHER, AN ENLARGEMENT OF THE CREDIT OFFER TO, SAY, DM 1.5 BILLION MIGHT HAVE DONE THE JOB-- AND DONE IT IN A WAY WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN CONSISTENT WITH THE BRANDT POLICY OF BASING FRG RELATIONS WITH EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ON FUTURE COOPERATION RATHER THAN ON SETTLEMENT OF PAST DEBTS. FOREIGN OFFICE REPS BLAME THE THEN FINANCE MINISTER SCHMIDT FOR HAVING BLOCKED ANY SUCH ENLARGEMENT OF THE CREDIT OFFER AT THE CRITICAL TIME. IF GENSCHER HAS ADOPTED THE VIEWS OF HIS ADVISERS, ONE CAN ASSUME THAT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIM AND THE CHANCELLOR ARISE NOT ONLY FROM A NATURAL

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DESIRE ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S PART TO KEEP A PIECE OF FOREIGN POLICY TERRITORY FREE FROM THE ENCROACHMENTS OF THE "OMNIPOTENT SCHMIDT", BUT ALSO FROM A GENUINE DIFFERENCE OF OPINION AS TO WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE IN THE PAST AND STILL MIGHT BE DONE TO WARM UP THE FROSTY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BONN AND WARSAW.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CREDIT, FOREIGN RELATIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, ALLEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BONN16879
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740306-0708
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741017/aaaaaofn.tel
Line Count: 114
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <05 JUL 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRG RELATIONS WITH POLAND
TAGS: PFOR, EFIN, GE, PL, (SCHMIDT, HELMUT), (GENSCHER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005